

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SA, EEC, US, WA

SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICA'S REPLY TO THE EC-9 ON NAMIBIA

1. AMBASSADOR BOTHA CALLED THE AFTERNOON OF MARCH 10 TO
REPORT ON HIS GOVERNMENT'S REPLY TO THE EC-9.

2. THE SOUTH AFRICAN NOTE REFERS TO THE EC-9'S DEMARCHE
OF FEBRUARY 7, 1977 AND SAYS:

(A) THE EC-9 WILL HAVE NOTED RECENT PRESS REPORTS THAT
THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE IN WINDHOEK HAS MADE
SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS IN BRINGING SOUTHWEST AFRICA TO
INDEPENDENCE.

(B) IT WOULD SEEM TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT THAT
THE DIRECTION IN WHICH THE CONFERENCE IS MOVING INDICATES

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THAT IT (THE CONFERENCE) IS SUBSTANTIALLY IN ACCORD WITH
MOST OF THE REQUIREMENTS WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE
NINE ARE NECESSARY TO A SETTLEMENT OF THE POLITICAL AND
CONSTITUTIONAL FUTURE OF THE TERRITORY.

(C) THIS IS ESPECIALLY SO WITH REGARD TO BASIC ISSUES
WHICH HAVE BEEN STRESSED IN THE UNITED NATIONS OVER

THE YEARS, VIS:

...(1) THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE TERRITORY IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

...(2) THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE TERRITORY AS A WHOLE.

...(3) MAJORITY GOVERNMENT FOR THE TERRITORY.

(D) IT WOULD SEEM TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT THAT ALTHOUGH CERTAIN POINTS OF DIFFERENCE REMAIN, THERE IS A CONSIDERABLE MEASURE OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN IT (THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT) AND THE NINE IN REGARD TO MOST REQUIREMENTS SET OUT BY THE NINE IN PARAGRAPH 3 OF THEIR NOTE.

(E) IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH THE NINE AND/OR THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN AN EFFORT TO BRIDGE THE REMAINING GAP.

3. BOTHA COMMENTED ON HIS GOVERNMENT'S NOTE TO THE NINE AND SAID THAT THE NOTE CLEARLY INDICATED THE DOOR TO FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS REMAINS OPEN. THERE IS NO TALK OF FIGHTING. FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT HAD GIVEN AN OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION ON A MULTILATERAL BASIS, TO NAMIBIA'S INDEPENDENCE IN THE NEAR FUTURE, THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF
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NAMIBIA, AND MAJORITY RULE. EQUALLY, BOTHA'S GOVERNMENT, FOR THE FIRST TIME, HAS INDICATED THAT IT IS PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE ISSUES RAISED IN THE CONTEXT OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND BELIEVES THAT THE GAP DIVIDING POSITIONS COULD BE BRIDGED. THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT IS PREPARED TO RECEIVE THE UNITED NATIONS' SECRETARY GENERAL AND ALLOW HIM TO CONDUCT AN ON-THE-GROUND SURVEY.

BOTHA STRESSED THAT OBTAINING THE PRIME MINISTER'S AGREEMENT TO "MAJORITY RULE" FOR NAMIBIA, AND HIS AGREEMENT TO ALLOWING WALDHEIM TO VISIT HAD BEEN DIFFICULT. THE DECISIONS REPRESENTED MAJOR SOUTH AFRICAN CONCESSIONS.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT, BOTHA SAID, REALIZES THE DIFFICULTIES WHICH THE UNITED STATES FACES WITH RESPECT TO SWAPO, THE UNITED NATIONS, AND THE AFRICANS. IT IS HIS GOVERNMENT'S REQUEST THAT WE UNDERSTAND ITS

POSITION AND ITS RESPONSIBILITIES FOR AND DIFFICULTIES
WITH THE WHITE POPULATION OF THE TERRITORY. BOTHA
SUGGESTS THAT WALDHEIM MIGHT THINK OF PUTTING FORWARD
A LIST OF QUESTIONS WHICH THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT
COULD ANSWER. THESE QUESTIONS COULD COVER ISSUES
WHICH HAVE BEEN TAKEN UP IN PAST UNITED NATIONS
RESOLUTIONS AND COULD INCLUDE QUESTIONS ON ENDING
APARTHEID AND THE FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT AND TRAVEL IN
AND OUT OF THE TERRITORY. SOUTH AFRICA WOULD BE
PREPARED TO FURNISH "SATISFACTORY ANSWERS."
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